



City of Westminster

# Cabinet Member Report

<b>Meeting or Decision Maker:</b>	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
<b>Date:</b>	20 December 2023
<b>Classification:</b>	Part Exempt – Appendix B is exempt from publication under Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972
<b>Title:</b>	Oxford Street Programme – Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	West End and Marylebone
<b>Policy Context:</b>	Fairer Economy – A reimagined and revived Oxford Street and West End that delivers a world class offer and experience to residents, businesses and visitors supporting a diverse, resilient, and successful economy that delivers growth in Westminster.
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes, Significant expenditure
<b>Financial Summary:</b>	<p>The Capital Strategy was approved by Full Council on 8 March 2023 and includes an expenditure budget of £124.4m for the Oxford Street programme from 2022/23 onwards.</p> <p>This report requests approval of £917,945 to progress the design for Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place and all associated costs.</p>
<b>Report of:</b>	Bernie Flaherty, Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health and Deputy Chief Executive, Westminster City Council

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member Report (CMR) of 1 November 2022 set out a revised scope of works for the Oxford Street Programme (OSP), which includes the design and delivery of traffic improvement schemes on Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place. These projects form part of the Marylebone/Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme.
- 1.2 The projects aim to deliver a simplified road network and proposes converting Henrietta Place/Margaret Street to accommodate two-way traffic between Wimpole Street to John Princes Street, and Great Portland Street and Great Titchfield Street. Additionally, the reversal of traffic movement on the east and west side of Cavendish Square is planned. These measures offer an opportunity to rebalance road space and traffic signal timing for the benefit of pedestrians while maintaining appropriate traffic capacity and discouraging high speeds.
- 1.3 This report recommends that the design for these schemes are progressed and a drawdown of funding is requested from the previously approved £150m capital funding budget allocated to the programme. On completion of this design work, a further CMR will be submitted to request the finalisation of design and to proceed to construction. Works are planned to commence in 2025.
- 1.4 The proposed OSP projects, including those in the Marylebone/Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme area, were subject to a public consultation in Summer 2023. This report outlines the outcome of this consultation with specific reference to the feedback received on the proposed changes specified in 1.2 above.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development:
  - 2.1.1 Approves the scope and proposals for Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place, as part of the Marylebone/Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme, and the investment required to design and build the corresponding projects.
  - 2.1.2 Approves the capital expenditure of £917,945 to progress the items outlined in 1.2.

## **3. Reasons for Decision**

- 3.1 The projects proposed within the Marylebone/Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme area are being progressed as part of wider OSP initiatives and support the Oxford Street design. The interventions aim to simplify the road network by converting several streets to two-way streets, thereby creating calmer and safer environment. These projects offer an opportunity to rebalance road space and traffic signal timings to enhance the pedestrian experience while maintaining appropriate traffic capacity and discouraging high speeds.

- 3.2 Expenditure is required to progress the design, including Stage 1 (feasibility) and Stage 2 (initial) design for the Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place projects.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 In 2019, Westminster City Council (WCC) developed plans for a district-wide approach for the investment required to address public realm, safety, transport, and economic challenges faced by Oxford Street and the wider area. A Place Strategy and Delivery Plan, and a business case approving £150 million capital funding from the Council, were subsequently approved for the 'Oxford Street District' programme.
- 4.2 Following the local elections in May 2022 the new administration considered how best to proceed with the Oxford Street District programme. In accordance with the Fairer Westminster manifesto the decision was made to focus council funding on improvements required for Oxford Street itself, along with selected side streets, rather than a whole district approach. The programme was renamed the 'Oxford Street Programme' (OSP).
- 4.3 The vision of the Oxford Street Programme (OSP) is to:
- “Ensure that Oxford Street is a great place for shoppers, tourists, workers and local residents through the creation of a dynamic and sustainable environment and an enhanced public realm that strengthens the global status of the street”.*
- 4.4 The revised programme scope focuses public realm improvements along the entire length of Oxford Street from Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road, together with traffic schemes in the wider area to allow vehicles to travel shorter, more direct routes and consequently create calmer streets by reducing the dominance of vehicle traffic. Appendix A outlines all the proposed highways schemes, including the extent of the Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place projects.
- 4.5 The traffic proposals for Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place are outlined below:
- a. Convert Henrietta Place/Margaret Street to accommodate two-way traffic between Wimpole Street to John Princes Street and Great Portland Street and Great Titchfield Street.
  - b. Reverse traffic movement on the east and west sides of Cavendish Square (Cavendish East will become northbound and Cavendish West will become southbound).
  - c. Permit buses, taxis, cyclists only between Cavendish Square East and John Princes Street.
  - d. Changes to bus operations and bus stand locations to reduce the length of turnaround routes in the area.

- e. Provide a new north-south cycling connection via Holles Street.

## 5. Financial Implications

### *Budget Allocations*

- 5.1 The total OSP expenditure budget approved by Full Council in March 2023 was £124.4m for 2022/23 onwards. The total budget allocation is £127.592m taking into consideration costs incurred prior to 2022/23 which can be utilised by the revised programme. The budget was based on the delivery of the historic district wide programme and there was a recognition that this would need to be revised based on new delivery workstreams and more aspirational funding expectations.
- 5.2 The budget allocation is expected to cover works on Oxford Street and Oxford Circus, as well as highway works on adjacent streets, and complementary schemes (on the condition of 50% funding being received where appropriate).
- 5.3 A high level WCC funded budget of £16.8 million was earmarked for highways works, which are essential for the delivery of the programme. This was referenced in the Full Business Case and the Oxford Street and Oxford Circus CMR - both of which were endorsed by Capital Review Group (CRG) in July 2023 and approved by Cabinet in September 2023. There is no external funding for this Capital spend and all costs will be met by the existing approved Capital budget.
- 5.4 Spend approval of £0.918m against the £16.8m enabling works allocation is now sought to deliver improvements at Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place as outlined in 4.6 above. These costs are forecasted to be incurred between Q4 2023/24 and Q3 2024/25.
- 5.5 Further spend approvals for other schemes enabling works will be brought forward as required.

### *Cost summary*

- 5.6 Table 1 below outlines the total funding requested for the projects in question, which reflects the costs provided by MCJV. A full cost breakdown is available in Appendix B.

**Table 1:** Total Funding Request

Cost type	Margaret Street	Henrietta Place	Total
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Design costs	183	226	409
Third party costs*	145	55	200
WCC costs	22	25	47
Risk and Contingency**	140	122	262
<b>Total Funding Request</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>918</b>

*\*Third party costs include utility diversion costs, TfL junctions and TfL temporary traffic signals.*

*\*\*Risk and contingency of 40% has been applied which is consistent with other Council projects at the design stage.*

### **Revenue Implications**

- 5.7 The Council currently manage and maintain Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place within the existing city-wide Highways and Cleansing contract. Due to the usage of standard pallet materials for these Capital works there will be no increase in maintenance costs to the Council.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 The City Council is the highway authority for Oxford Street and the side roads and junctions with it that form part of the revised OSP. The Highways Act 1980 provides the Council with the statutory powers to carry out works to improve highways and pedestrian facilities. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended provides permitted development rights that allow highway authorities to carry out necessary work to maintain or improve roads and pedestrian facilities and undertake necessary or incidental work outside but adjoining road boundaries without the need for planning permission.

## **7. Carbon Impact**

- 7.1 Westminster City Council declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030 and a carbon neutral city by 2040 and adapting its built environment to be more resilient to climate change. One of the key ways it will deliver this is through the creation of more sustainable streets and the improvement of carbon impact through design and construction. This includes considering the impact of material selection, sourcing, and transportation, drainage and providing the conditions to encourage active modes of transport.
- 7.2 The delivery of a more simplified road network and support for active travel modes, including pedestrian and cyclist movement as outlined in 4.6, is in line with the wider Council commitment to sustainability. This is supported by the rebalancing of road space that enables shorter vehicular journey times. In addition:
- a. A continuous two-way route for people cycling is created east-west along the Margaret Street, Cavendish Square, Henrietta Place corridor. This provides a connection to a new north-south two-way cycling route on Holles Street. There are proposals being developed to continue this route further north through the Council's Highways team. Improving connectivity helps to encourage more cyclists.
  - b. The proposals include improvements to pedestrian crossings and footways in the area. Currently there are missing footways and walking

connections which are addressed as part of the proposals, particularly around Cavendish Square. The wider and better aligned pedestrian crossings at the Holles Street junction will help to open up new routes and make the green space more accessible and inviting.

- 7.3 MCJV is committed to reducing the carbon impact of their construction activity and propose to use electric tools and vehicles during construction where practicable. Commitments have been made to divert 98% of waste from landfill and reuse 95% of materials.

## **8. Equalities Implications**

- 8.1 All projects delivered through the OSP will embed accessibility and inclusion principles from design up to delivery. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is being carried out for all projects to be delivered through the OSP. An EqIA is a process designed to ensure that a policy, project or scheme does not unlawfully discriminate against any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The assessment indicates the proposed public realm improvements will have an overall positive impact on multiple protected characteristics. The EqIA will continue to be enhanced and developed as the projects progress.

## **9. Consultation**

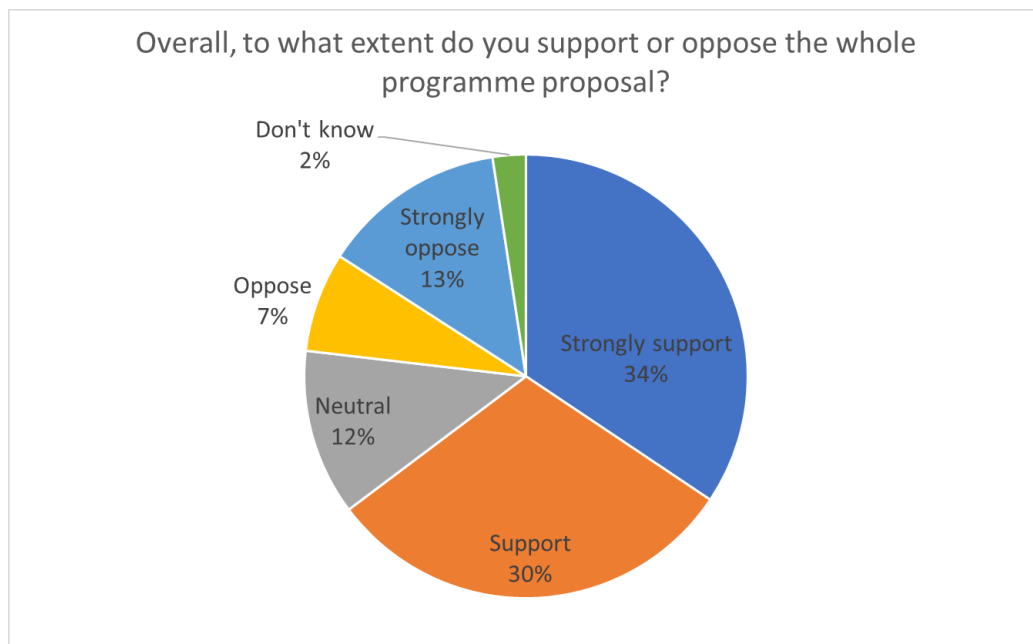
- 9.1 The OSP seeks to create inclusive opportunities for engagement and consultation with all interested stakeholders and is committed to open and transparent communication. This is at the core of the programme engagement and consultation strategy which outlines the following key principles:
- a) Inform – Informing people of what is happening, when and why.
  - b) Involve – Enabling everyone to have their say and building relationships.
  - c) Empower – Inspiring people to play an active role in influencing outcomes.
- 9.2 Internal and external engagement is pivotal to the programme and has involved a number of activities to date, meetings with Ward Councillors, TfL, resident associations, landowners and the GLA to provide an outline on the status of the programme and look ahead.
- 9.3 On 14 March 2023, a meeting and site walk was held with resident groups to discuss OSP highways proposals including those in the Marylebone and Fitzrovia areas.
- 9.4 The OSP design team are working closely with the Reef regarding the proposed development at Cavendish Square regarding scope and construction interfaces. An interim road layout is being investigated if the development works proceed.
- 9.5 The OSP consultation strategy provides the framework for the development of an engagement plan for all projects. As part of this, the OSP team delivered a

public consultation campaign for six weeks in Summer 2023. This consultation sought views on the following projects:

- a. Oxford Street
- b. Oxford Circus
- c. Marylebone Fitzrovia (including Wigmore Street, Mortimer Street, Henrietta Place and Margaret Street)
- d. Oxford Street West (including Park Street, North Audley Street, Portman Street and Orchard Street)
- e. East Castle Street junction improvements

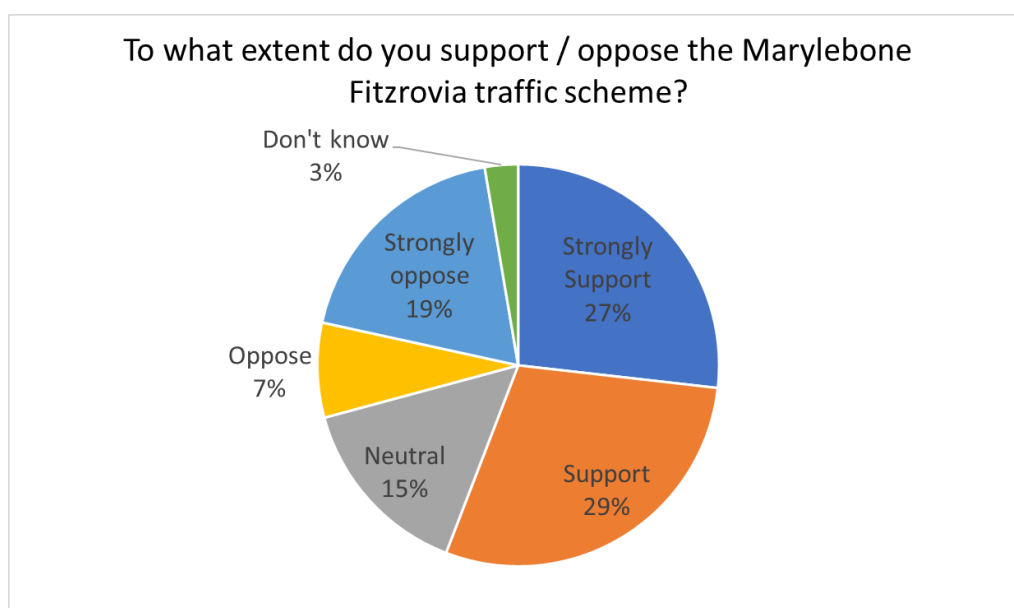
All engagement and consultation on the programme and individual projects are reviewed by and supported through the Council's Communications and Communities Teams.

- 9.6 The public consultation and engagement activities used various techniques and tools including a dedicated webpage, newsletters, questionnaires, meetings, postcard drops and public consultation sessions. The feedback from consultation and engagement will be used, where applicable, to amend and influence the designs as they progress.
- 9.7 Full results of the consultation will be compiled, analysed and published in Autumn 2023. However, in advance of this reporting being finalised, the following results summary can be presented:
  - a. 1612 questionnaire responses were received
  - b. 27 direct emails of written feedback
  - c. 180+ attendees of in person meetings
  - d. 500+ people engaged at three local markets
  - e. 12,800 postcards delivered to local residents
  - f. 20,755 views of the OSP website
- 9.8 Participants were asked a number of questions relating to different projects within the OSP. To the question relating to the overall programme, '*Overall, to what extent do you support or oppose the whole programme proposal?*', most responses, totalling 64%, were in favour. The results are summarised in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1 – Summary of Response to the OSP**

9.9 A total of 711 respondents provided their input on the Marylebone/Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme and corresponding projects. There was a total of 711 respondents who wished to answer questions about the proposals for Marylebone / Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme area. A large proportion, comprising 29% of respondents (206 individuals), expressed their support for the scheme and 27% (190 individuals) indicated that they strongly support it. Contrastingly, there were 8% (54 individuals) who opposed the scheme and 19% (134 individuals) who strongly opposed it. Refer to Figure 2 for a summary of responses to the proposed projects in this area.





**Figure 2 – How respondents felt about the proposed Marylebone / Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme**

- 9.10 Specific comments on the proposed projects were received from a number of stakeholders including the FitzWest Neighbourhood Forum and the Marylebone Association. This feedback is contained in Appendix C along with the Council's responses. The feedback from public consultation will be fed into the Stage 1 designs and further engagement will be carried out with stakeholders to mitigate issues.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact:**

Bernie Flaherty, Deputy Chief Executive, Westminster City Council

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A:** Geographical extent of the Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place projects in the Marylebone/Fitzrovia Traffic Scheme area

**Appendix B:** Restricted Appendices – Detailed Cost Breakdown

"Not for Publication" on the grounds that it contains exempt information within paragraphs 3 and 5 (information relating to Financial or Business Affairs and Legal Privilege) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and the public interest in applying this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**Appendix C:** Consultation Responses

For completion by the **Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development**

**Declaration of Interest**

I have no interest to declare in respect of this report

Signed:



Date: 12 December 2023

NAME: **Councillor Geoff Barraclough**

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State nature of interest if any:

*(N.B: If you have an interest, you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)*

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled

Oxford Street Programme – Margaret Street, Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed:



Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

Date: 12 December 2023

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If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment:

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If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Director of Law, City Treasurer and, if there are resources implications, the Director of People Services (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy & Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.